

Atty Dkt. No.: LIFE033
USSN: 10/052,212

AMENDMENTS

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-96 (Cancelled)

97. (Currently Amended) A device for storing test strips at least one test strip and dispensing a single test strip at a time, said device comprising:

 a housing comprising:

 (a) a cover; and

 (b) a base configured to store a plurality of test strips, wherein the height of said base is less than the length of each of the test strips, such that a portion of each of the test strips stored in said base extends beyond the height of said base, wherein said device further comprises a surface having a scaling ridge and surface having a sealing groove mateable with said scaling ridge to provide a substantially air and moisture tight seal when said scaling ridge and said sealing groove are mated together base and said cover are mateable to provide a sealed housing.

98. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 97, wherein when said at least one test strip is stored in said device, said height of said base is at least about two thirds of the length of each of the test strips stored in said device.

99. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 97, wherein said base further comprises an urging element for applying a force to the stored test strips when stored in said device.

100. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 99, wherein said urging element is selected from the group consisting of sponge, foam, a spring and a plunger.

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101. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 97, wherein said base further comprises a substantially planar, rigid plate for maintaining the stored test strips stored in said device in a suitable orientation for dispensing.

102. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 97, wherein said housing comprises at least one attachment means configured to mate said cover with said base.

103. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 102, wherein said at least one attachment means is at least one of a threading means, an O-ring gasket, a lock and key mechanism, a tensioning clamp and a snap fit mechanism.

104. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 97, wherein said base further comprises a test strip engagement element configured to dispense a single test strip at a time from said housing when at least one test strip is stored in said device.

105. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 104, wherein said test strip engagement element comprises at least one lip extension configured to separate the single test strip from said plurality of stored test strips.

106. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 104, wherein said test strip engagement element comprises at least one grasping means for grasping a single test strip at a time when at least one test strip is stored in said device.

107. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 97, wherein said base further comprises a test strip segregation means for segregating a plurality of test strips retained in said base.

108. (Currently Amended) The device according to claim 107, wherein said test strip segregation means is positioned on a bottom wall of said base and is at least one of an apex, pattern and a protrusion.

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109. --110. (Cancelled)

111. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 97, wherein said cover and said base are two, separate pieces.

112. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 97, wherein said device is configured to enable a threadable engagement of said cover to said base.

113. (Currently Amended) A device for storing a plurality of test strips and dispensing a single test strip at a time, said device comprising:

(a) a base configured to provide a substantially closed interior space for storing a plurality of test strips, wherein said base substantially closed interior space comprises an opening permissive of only configured to position a single test strip at a time for dispensing from said base; and

(b) a cover configured to mate with said base to provide a substantially air and moisture tight seal at the interface of said base and said cover when said base and said cover are in a mated configuration.

114. (Cancelled)

115. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 113, wherein said device further comprises a sealing ridge and a corresponding sealing groove configured to provide said substantially air and moisture tight seal.

116. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 113, wherein said base further comprises an urging element for applying a force to the stored test strips.

117. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 116, wherein said urging element is selected from the group consisting of sponge, foam, a spring and a plunger.

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118. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 113, wherein said base further comprises a substantially planar, rigid plate for maintaining the stored test strips in a suitable orientation for dispensing.

119. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 118, wherein said substantially planar, rigid plate is configured to orient the longitudinal axis of each of said stored test strips parallel to the longitudinal axis of said base.

120. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 113, wherein said housing further comprises at least one attachment means configured to engage said cover to said base.

121. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 120, wherein said at least one attachment means is at least one of a threading means, an O-ring gasket, a lock and key mechanism, a tensioning clamp and a snap fit mechanism.

122. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 113, wherein said base further comprises a test strip engagement element configured to move the single test strip positioned within said opening in a direction away from said base.

123. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 122, wherein said test strip engagement element comprises at least one grasping means for grasping the single test strip.

124. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 113, wherein said cover and said base are two, separate pieces.

125. (Previously Presented) The device according to claim 113, wherein said device is configured to enable a threadable engagement of said cover to said base.

126. (Withdrawn) A device for storing a plurality of test strips and dispensing a single test strip at a time, said device comprising:

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a housing comprising a lip extension configured to separate a single test strip from a plurality of test strip stored in said housing.

127. (Withdrawn) A method for storing one or more test strips and dispensing a single test strip at a time, said method comprising:

- (a) providing a housing having a stack of test strips stored therein;
- (b) exerting a first force to a first side said stack;
- (c) exerting a second opposing force to an opposing, second side of said stack; and
- (d) moving a single test strip at a time in a direction away from said stack, whereby said single test strip is dispensed from said housing.

128. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 127, wherein said step of moving comprises moving said single test strip adjacent a lip extension, whereby said lip extension permits said single test strip to be dispensed from said housing while preventing other test strips from being dispensed from said housing.

129. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 128, wherein said lip extension prevents said other test strips from being dispensed by catching said remaining test strips under said lip extension.

130. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 127, wherein said step of moving comprises grasping said single test strip with a grasping means.

131. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 127, wherein said step of moving is accomplished automatically.

132. (Withdrawn) The method according to claim 127, wherein said step of moving is accomplished manually.

133. (Currently Amended) A method for storing at least one test strip and dispensing a single test strip at a time, said method comprising:

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(a) providing a device comprising a base configured to provide a substantially closed interior space for storing at least one test strip, wherein said base substantially closed interior space comprises an opening permissive of only one ~~base~~ configured to position a single test strip at a time for dispensing from said base, wherein at least one test strip is stored in said closed interior space, and a cover configured to mate with said base to provide a substantially air and moisture tight seal at the interface of said base and said cover when said base and said cover are in a mated configuration;

(b) positioning a single test strip at a time within said opening; and

(c) advancing said single test strip in a direction away from said base, whereby said single test strip is dispensed from said device.

134. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 133, wherein said step of advancing comprises grasping said single test strip positioned in said opening with a grasping means.

135. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 133, wherein said step of advancing is accomplished with an automated advancing means automatically.

136. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 133, wherein said step of advancing is accomplished manually.

137. (Withdrawn) A method for storing a plurality of test strips and dispensing a single test strip at a time, said method comprising:

(a) providing a device comprising a housing having a lip extension; and

(b) advancing a test strip adjacent said lip extension, whereby said single test strip is dispensed from said housing.

138. (Currently Amended) A kit for containing at least one test strip and dispensing a single test strip at a time, said kit comprising:

(a) at least one device according to one of claim 97 and claim 113; and

(b) at least one test strip, instructions for using said at least one device.

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139. (Cancelled)

140. (Currently Amended) The kit according to claim 138 ~~139~~, wherein said at least one test strip is an electrochemical test strip.

141. (Currently Amended) The kit according to claim 138 ~~139~~, wherein said at least one test strip is a colorimetric test strip.

142. (Original) The kit according to claim 138, further comprising a meter.

143. - 144 (Cancelled)